

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIAGO 00062 261645Z

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ACTION ARA-20

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6967

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, PFOR, SW

SUBJ: SWEDISH REPLY TO CHILEAN PROTEST NOTE

REF: A) SANTIAGO 6228, B) STOCKHOLM 4532

1. SWEDISH CHARGE GROTH PRESENTED REPLY DEC 21 TO CHILEAN NOTE PROTESTING PRIME MINISTER PALME'S ROLE IN DONATING FUNDS FOR "CHILEAN RESISTANCE MOVEMENT" (REFTELS). IN LOW-KEY RESPONSE, TEXT OF WHICH LATER MADE PUBLIC, GOVERNMENT OF SWEDEN "LAMENTED THE MISUNDERSTANDING" CONCERNING THE CEREMONY, NOTED THAT ALL FUNDS COLLECTED CAME FROM PRIVATE SOURCES, STRESSED THAT PALME WAS ACTING EXCLUSIVELY IN HIS ROLE AS PRESIDENT OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND NOT AS PRIME MINISTER, AND ADDED THAT TO EMPHASIZE THIS DISTINCTION CEREMONY WAS CONDUCTED AT PARTY OFFICES AND NOT ON GOVT PROPERTY. NOTE CONCLUDED THAT CEREMONY WAS EXCLUSIVELY PRIVATE AND THEREFORE NORMS GOVERNING RELATIONS AMONG STATES DID NOT COME INTO PLAY. SWEDISH REPLY RECEIVED ONLY SECONDARY PRESS ATTENTION WITH NO COMMENTARIES. OTHER PRESS ARTICLES, HOWEVER, STRONGLY CRITICIZED PALME'S ACTION AND ESPECIALLY "THE ATTITUDE IT REPRESENTS."

2. ATTENTION CONTINUES ON CALDERON CASE (REF A AND SANTIAGO 6258). CALDERON IS STILL IN MILITARY HOSPITAL IN SERIOUS CONDITION AFTER AT LEAST ONE OPERATION. DEC 23 FONMIN HUERTA PUBLICLY REAFFIRMED
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PAGE 02 SANTIAGO 00062 261645Z

GOVT VERSION THAT CALDERON SHOOTING WAS DUE TO INTERNAL SQUABBLING

AMONG ARMED ASYLEES IN CUBAN EMBASSY (WHICH IS UNDER SWEDISH PROTECTION). HUERTA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE FOUND IT STRANGE THAT "A HIGH SWEDISH DIPLOMATIC OFFICIAL" HAD ASKED THAT CALDERON BE RETURNED TO SWEDISH EMBASSY IN SPITE OF HIS CONDITION. HUERTA ALSO STATED THAT SWEDISH CHARGE HAD INFORMED HIM DEC 21 THAT GOS WAS SENDING A PROMINENT NEUROSURGEON NAMED DR. ERIC KAGSTROM FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF LUND TO "ASSIST" CHILEAN DOCTORS TREATING CALDERON. DR. KAGSTROM ARRIVED DEC 22. CHILEAN MEDICAL ASSN. THEN ANGRILY REJECTED NEED FOR ANY SUCH FOREIGN SPECIALIST, AND GOVT ISSUED STATEMENT DEC 25 ANNOUNCING DR. KAGSTROM HAD BEEN ASKED TO LEAVE CHILE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. COMMENT. AS BOTH WE AND EMBASSY STOCKHOLM HAVE NOTED (REFTELS), ONE WONDERS HOW MUCH FURTHER CHILE/SWEDISH RELATIONS CAN BE STRAINED WITHOUT A BREAK. WHILE THE PALME FUNDS DONATION AND SUBSEQUENT CHILEAN PROTEST APPEAR TO BE CONSIDERED CLOSED ISSUES BY BOTH GOVTS, ONE MORE SUCH INCIDENT, POSSIBLY THE CALDERON/KAGSTROM AFFAIR, COULD EASILY TRIGGER A FORMAL RUPTURE, ESPECIALLY IF SWEDEN FINDS SOME GRACEFUL WAY OF TRANSFERRING ITS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ASYLEES UNDER ITS PROTECTION TO SOME OTHER GOVT.

THOMPSON

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